

- The fertility rate for girls 14 or younger, projected to rise from 1.6 to 1.8, and for girls age 17, projected to rise from 55.2 to 57.0.
- The percentage of abortions performed in the second trimester, projected to rise from 12.3 to 12.4.
- The percentage of low-weight births among whites, projected to rise from 6.1 to 6.2.
- The motor vehicle death rate in total, projected to rise 18% from 26.9 to 31.7, and among children under 15, projected to rise 9% from 10.3 to 11.2.
- The drug-related death rate, projected to rise from 2.6 to 2.7.
- The homicide rate for Black males 15-24, projected to rise 9% from 39.6 to 43.0.
- The number of reported abused and neglected children (ages 0-17), projected to rise 11.5% in three years from 34,959 (FY 87) to 38,973 (FY 90).

The rising number of child abuse cases undoubtedly reflects surveillance and reporting artifacts to some extent; nevertheless, there is cause for concern. With the population ages 0-17 declining, the child abuse case rate (reported or confirmed) has risen even faster than the number of cases. Also noteworthy is the declining percentage of "confirmed" cases among those reported. This percentage is projected to decline from 35.4 in FY 87 to about 31.4 in FY 90 following a consistent 40-43 percent during all of fiscal years 1977-1984. Reasons for the decline are unknown.

The final conclusions to be drawn from this assessment must await data year 1990. Meanwhile, it is hoped that this review will be helpful to those responsible for setting North Carolina's health agenda over the next several years.